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JOHN J. CULLERTON
MAJORITY CAUCUS WHIP
STATE SENATOR • 6TH DISTRICT

July 5th, 2005

Comment 139

Chief, Regulations & Procedures Division
Alcohol & Tobacco Tax & Trade Bureau
Attn: Notice No. 41
P.O. Box 14412
Washington, D.C. 20044-4412

Dear Chief:

Current federal alcohol beverage label regulations do not allow most beer, wine, and distilled spirits companies to provide information about their products so that consumers can make informed choices about what to drink and how much to drink. TTB is to be commended for seeking public comment on proposed changes to these regulations.

Food, soft drinks, over-the-counter drugs, and even dietary supplements provide consumers with basic consumer information on the label. Alcoholic beverages (with some exceptions) are the only major class of consumable goods that do not provide this type of information on the label. TTB should allow labels voluntarily to list information such as serving size and servings per container, as well as alcohol, calories, fat, carbohydrates, and protein per serving. Of all this information, the amount of alcohol per serving would be the most beneficial for consumers to have.

The standard serving definition used in the *Dietary Guidelines* (12 ounces of regular beer, 5 ounces of table wine, and 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits) is one widely used by U.S. government agencies, public health groups, consumer groups, and a majority of state driver's license manuals. It makes sense to use the same definition as the benchmark for labels.

I urge TTB to act expeditiously to promulgate a regulation that permits meaningful consumer-oriented Serving Facts on beer, wine, and spirits labels. Meanwhile, I urge TTB to allow manufacturers to provide this kind of truthful, non-misleading information on labels while the rulemaking process proceeds.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John J. Cullerton".

John J. Cullerton
State Senator 6th
District